

Appl. No. : 10/079,062
Filed : February 20, 2002

REMARKS

By way of summary, Claims 1-27 were pending in this application. In the Office Action, Claims 1-5, 17, 20, 22, and 23 were rejected. Claims 6-16, 18, 19, and 21 were indicated as being allowable. Claims 24-27 were allowed. Claims 2-6, 9-12, 14-17 and 19, 20 and 22 have been amended. Claim 1 has been canceled. New Claims 28-38 have been added. Accordingly, Claims 2-23 and 28-38 are pending.

Allowable Claims Have Been Rewritten

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 6-16, 18, 19, and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, Claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the claim from which it depended. Claims 2-5, 9-12, 15-17 and 19, 20 and 22 have been rewritten to depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 6. Accordingly with this amendment, Claims 2-5 and 7-23 depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 6. Thus, Claims 2-23 are in a condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request that these claims be allowed.

In addition, Applicants have rewritten Claim 18, which the Examiner indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, to include all the limitations from the claims from which it depended, as new Claim 30. New Claims 31-38 depend from allowable Claim 30. Each dependent claim recites a unique patentable combination of elements. Accordingly, new Claims 30-38 are in a condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request that these claims be allowed.

New Claims 28 and 29

New Claims 28 and 29 depend from Claim 25, which the Examiner allowed in the Office Action. Each dependent claim recites a unique patentable combination of elements. Accordingly, new Claims 28 and 29 are in a condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request that these claims be allowed.

Claims 1-5, 17, 20, and 22-23

Claims 1-5, 17, 20, and 22-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,151,160 issued to Koebner. Applicants do not agree with the

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characterization of the reference set forth by the Examiner nor with the rejection of original Claims 1-5, 17, 20, and 22-23. Nevertheless, to expedite the issuance of other pending claims, Applicants have amended the claims as noted above and have cancelled Claim 1. Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date claims identical and/or similar to the original claim.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in a condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request that a Notice of Allowance be issued at the earliest opportunity.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

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By: Karoline A. Delaney
Karoline A. Delaney
Registration No. 44,058
Attorney of Record
Customer No. 20,995
(949) 760-0404

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